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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6499**

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**State of Washington**

**63rd Legislature**

**2014 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Dammeier, McAuliffe, Litzow, Ranker, Billig, Frockt, Tom, Hargrove, Fain, and Rivers)

READ FIRST TIME 02/06/14.

1       AN ACT Relating to creating the joint task force on local education  
2 financing reform; creating new sections; and providing an expiration  
3 date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5       NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that Article IX of  
6 the state Constitution provides: "It is the paramount duty of the  
7 state to make ample provision for the education of all children  
8 residing within its borders ... " The legislature further finds that  
9 the legislature's duty under Article IX of the state Constitution is to  
10 define and amply fund the program of basic education using dependable  
11 resources.

12       (2) The legislature acknowledges that while local levies cannot be  
13 used to fund basic education, local levies enable schools to provide  
14 programs and activities beyond that required by Article IX of the state  
15 Constitution. The legislature recognizes that local levies are  
16 important to the educational funding system and is a primary method for  
17 communities to show support of the local schools.

18       (3) The legislature intends to create a legislative task force to

1 review the use of local levies by school districts and the equity  
2 issues resulting from various aspects of the local levy process, and to  
3 recommend approaches to address the equity issues.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The joint task force on local education  
5 financing reform is created to review the use of local levies by school  
6 districts and the equity issues resulting from various aspects of the  
7 local levy process, recommend approaches and draft legislation to  
8 address the equity issues identified, and submit a report to the  
9 governor and the legislature by December 1, 2014.

10 (2) Appointments to the task force shall be completed within thirty  
11 days of the effective date of this section. The task force shall  
12 consist of eight voting members and two ex officio members.

13 (a) The voting members shall be:

14 (i) Four members from the house of representatives, two from each  
15 major caucus, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;  
16 and

17 (ii) Four members from the senate, two from each major caucus,  
18 appointed by the majority leader and minority leader of the major  
19 caucuses of the senate.

20 (b) The two ex officio members shall be:

21 (i) The governor or the governor's designee; and

22 (ii) The superintendent of public instruction or the  
23 superintendent's designee.

24 (3) The voting members of the task force shall select cochairs from  
25 the voting members of the task force.

26 (4) The task force shall:

27 (a) Review the work of the levy and local effort assistance  
28 technical working group created in accordance with chapter 548, Laws of  
29 2009, and amended by chapter 236, Laws of 2010, and other relevant  
30 studies and information, including the final report of the compensation  
31 technical working group created in accordance with chapter 548, Laws of  
32 2009;

33 (b) Review the use of local levies by school districts, including  
34 the level of funding and how the funding is used by school districts;

35 (c) Review equity issues related to various aspects of the local  
36 levy process, including school district levy authority, the

1 determination of the levy base, the different levy lids, and levy  
2 equalization;

3 (d) Recommend approaches in a report to the governor and the  
4 legislature to address the equity issues and provide a system for state  
5 and local funds that are distributed in an equitably but not  
6 necessarily equivalent manner so that all children have the opportunity  
7 to meet the state's academic standards and become prepared for  
8 postsecondary careers and education. Any recommendation included in  
9 the report must be supported by at least six voting members of the task  
10 force. The report must include draft legislation to implement the  
11 recommendations of the task force.

12 (5) The task force shall receive staff and logistical support from  
13 the house of representatives office of program research, senate  
14 committee services, office of financial management, and the office of  
15 the superintendent of public instruction. The first meeting of the  
16 task force shall be convened by the house of representatives office of  
17 program research and senate committee services within forty-five days  
18 of the effective date of this section.

19 (6) Legislative members of the task force shall be reimbursed for  
20 travel expenses as provided in RCW 44.04.120.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act expires June 30, 2015.

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